



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Administration for Children and Families
Administration on Children, Youth and Families
Children's Bureau

Child and Family Services Review Summary of Findings

ALABAMA

June 2002

**U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Administration on Children, Youth and Families
Children's Bureau**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ALABAMA

The Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) assesses State performance during a specified time period with respect to seven child welfare outcomes in the areas of safety, permanency, and well-being and with respect to seven systemic factors. The assessment is based on information from the following sources:

- The Statewide Assessment prepared by the State child welfare agency – the Alabama Department of Human Resources (DHR);
- The State Data Profile prepared by the Children’s Bureau of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services;
- Reviews of 50 case records from three counties in the State; and
- Interviews or focus groups (conducted at all three counties and the State capital) with a wide range of stakeholders including children, parents, foster parents, various levels of State and local DHR personnel, collaborating agency personnel, school personnel, mental health providers, court personnel, legislators, and attorneys.

The review of Alabama’s child welfare programs showed that the State met the national standards for measures pertaining to the recurrence of maltreatment, maltreatment of children in foster care, re-entries into foster care, and stability of foster care placements. In addition, the State was in substantial conformity with Safety Outcome 1, *Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect*, and there were a number of individual items related to the seven outcomes that were found to be a Strength for the State. In particular, the State was noted to be effective with respect to the following:

- Preventing repeat maltreatment (item 2) and foster care re-entry (item 5).
- Providing stable foster care placements for children (item 6).
- Placing children in close proximity to their biological families (item 11) and with their siblings (item 12) when possible and in the children's best interest.
- Meeting children's physical health (item 22) service needs.

The State also was found to be in substantial conformity with six of the seven systemic factors. The State was in conformity with the factors pertaining to the Statewide information system; training; service array; responsiveness to the community; quality assurance system; and foster and adoptive parent licensing, recruitment, and retention.

A specific finding of the CFSR process was that Alabama's DHR is particularly strong with respect to its willingness, and the capacity it has developed, to provide a wide array of services to families not only to prevent an initial removal from home, but also to ensure that families that have been reunified receive the services and supports that they need for as long as they need them.

While Alabama was successful in the above areas of the review, a key finding of the review is that the State did not achieve substantial conformity with six of the seven safety, permanency, and well-being outcomes. The State also did not meet national standards for measures relating to the length of time to achieve reunification or the length of time to achieve adoption. The most significant concern with regard to outcomes is the timely achievement of permanency for children in foster care, as measured by items pertaining to the permanency goal for children (item 7), attainment of permanency through reunification, guardianship, or permanent placement with relative (item 8), or attainment of permanency through adoption (item 9). These items are assessed under Permanency Outcome 1, *Children have permanency and stability in their living situations*.

Another area of concern is related to Child and Family Well-Being Outcome 1, *Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs*. All of the four items assessed as part of this outcome were rated as an Area Needing Improvement. These items pertain to meeting the service needs of children and families, involving families in the case planning process, and the frequency of worker visits with children and parents.

The State also was not in substantial conformity with the systemic factor pertaining to the Case Review System. Assessment of this factor resulted in the finding that DHR practice is inconsistent with respect to involving parents in the development of case plans, holding permanency hearings for children in foster care, and providing a process for termination of parental rights (TPR) proceedings in accordance with the provisions of the Adoption and Safe Families Act.

The following is a summary of the CFSR findings with respect to outcomes and systemic factors.

KEY FINDINGS RELATED TO OUTCOMES

I. SAFETY

Outcome S1: Children are, first and foremost, protected from abuse and neglect.

Status of Safety Outcome S1

The Alabama DHR achieved substantial conformity with Safety Outcome 1. This determination was based on the following findings:

- 95 percent of the cases were rated as having substantially achieved this outcome, which is more than the 90 percent required for substantial conformity.

- The State met the national standard for the percentage of children experiencing more than one substantiated or indicated child maltreatment report within a 6-month period.
- The State met the national standard for the percentage of children experiencing maltreatment from caretakers while in foster care.

A summary of the findings for specific items assessed under this outcome is presented below.

Item 1. Timeliness of initiating investigations of reports of child maltreatment

Item 1 was assigned an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement because reviewers determined that in only 80 percent of the applicable cases, the response to maltreatment reports was within DHR policy timelines.

Item 2. Repeat maltreatment

Item 2 was assigned an overall rating of Strength because (1) children experienced two maltreatment incidents within 6 months of one another in only 5 percent of the cases reviewed, and (2) as reported in the State Data Profile, the incidence of repeat maltreatment within 6-months for Alabama in 2000 was 5.2 percent which meets the national standard of 6.1 percent.

Outcome S2: Children are safely maintained in their homes whenever possible and appropriate.

Status of Safety Outcome S2

Alabama did not achieve substantial conformity with Safety Outcome 2. This determination was based on the finding that the outcome was substantially achieved in only 69 percent of the case records reviewed, which is less than the 90 percent required for a rating of substantial conformity. A summary of the findings for specific items assessed under this outcome is presented below.

Item 3. Services to family to protect child(ren) in home and prevent removal

Item 3 was assigned an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement because in only 72 percent of the cases, reviewers determined that the agency's efforts to maintain children safely in their homes were either sufficient or appropriate based on the risk to the child. Despite this rating, the availability and quality of preventive services and the emphasis of the agency on using preventive services whenever possible is a clear strength for DHR.

Item 4. Risk of harm to child

Item 4 was assigned an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement because reviewers determined that in only 76 percent of the cases, DHR had made sufficient efforts to reduce risk of harm to children. The problem identified was one of inconsistency among workers in addressing risk issues for children being served in their own homes. In many cases, however, workers were found to be involved with families and to be managing risk in appropriate and effective ways.

II. PERMANENCY

Outcome P1: Children have permanency and stability in their living situations.

Status of Permanency Outcome P1 – Not in Substantial Conformity

Alabama did not achieve substantial conformity with Permanency Outcome 1. This determination was based on the following:

- Although the State met the national standards for foster care re-entries and stability of foster care placements, the State did not meet the national standards for reunifications within 12 months of entry into foster care and adoptions within 24 months of entry into foster care.
- 50 percent of the cases reviewed were rated as having substantially achieved Permanency Outcome 1, which is less than the 90 percent required for substantial conformity.

A summary of the findings for specific items assessed under this outcome is presented below.

Item 5. Foster care re-entries

Item 5 was assigned an overall rating of Strength because: (1) the State's incidence of foster care re-entry within 12 months of discharge from a prior episode is 7.9 percent, which meets the national standard of 8.6 percent, and (2) there were no cases in which foster care re-entry occurred.

Item 6. Stability of foster care placement

Item 6 was assigned an overall rating of Strength because: (1) in 87 percent of the cases, reviewers determined that children had placement stability or that placement changes were in the best interest of the child, and (2) data from the State Data Profile indicate that 96.4 percent of children in foster care for 12 months or less during FY 2000 had no more than two placement settings, which meets the national standard of 86.7 percent.

Item 7. Permanency goal for child

Item 7 was assigned an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement because in only 73 percent of the cases, reviewers determined that DHR had established appropriate permanency goals for children or had established goals in a timely manner. The key concerns identified pertained to the timely filing of TPR petitions, the appropriateness of the use of the goal of long-term foster care, and the inconsistent use of concurrent planning in working toward permanency for children.

Item 8. Reunification, Guardianship or Permanent Placement with Relatives

Item 8 was assigned an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement because: (1) data from the State Data Profile indicate that the State's percentage for reunifications occurring within 12 months of entry into care is 63.0, which does not meet the national standard of 76.2 percent, and (2) in only 62 percent of the cases, reviewers determined that the agency had made diligent efforts to attain permanency for children with a goal of reunification, permanent placement with relatives, or guardianship. A key concern identified was that in some cases the goal of reunification is being maintained even when parents are uncooperative and there is no evidence that parents are working toward their treatment goals.

Item 9. Adoption

Item 9 was assigned an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement because: (1) in only 22 percent of the applicable cases, reviewers determined that the agency was engaging in sufficient efforts to achieve finalized adoptions for children in foster care, and (2) data from the State Data Profile indicate that the State's percentage of finalized adoptions in FY 2000 that occurred within 24 months of removal from home is 13.1, which does not meet the national standard of 32.0. A key finding of the case record review process and stakeholder interviews was that DHR workers were either not completing the necessary paperwork to move children toward adoption, or that they were uninformed about the adoption process and about available adoption subsidies and were misinforming foster parents interested in adopting their foster children.

Item 10. Permanency goal of other planned permanent living arrangement

Item 10 was assigned an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement based on the finding that in only 62.5 percent of the cases, reviewers determined that the goal of long term foster care was appropriate, and the agency was adequately preparing the child for self-sufficient independent living at the time of emancipation.

Outcome P2: The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children.

Status of Permanency Outcome P2

Alabama did not achieve substantial conformity with Permanency Outcome 2. This determination was based on the finding that the outcome was rated as substantially achieved in 70 percent of the cases, which is less than the 90 percent required for substantial conformity. A summary of findings for specific items assessed relevant to this outcome is presented below.

Item 11. Proximity of foster care placement

Item 11 was assigned an overall rating of Strength because in 93 percent of the applicable cases, reviewers determined that children were placed in foster care homes that were in close proximity to their parents or, when children were not placed in close proximity, the placement was made to meet the special needs of the child.

Item 12. Placement with siblings

Item 12 was assigned an overall rating of Strength based on the finding that in 89 percent of the cases, siblings were either placed together or there was an appropriate reason for their separation. According to the Statewide Assessment, this finding is consistent with the results of internal quality assurance reviews indicating that siblings are placed together unless there is a need to address behavioral or emotional issues for one or more of the siblings.

Item 13. Visiting with parents and siblings in foster care

Item 13 was assigned an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement because in only 78 percent of the applicable cases, reviewers determined that DHR had made adequate efforts to facilitate visitation and was providing or ensuring adequate supervision during visits. Despite this rating, there were many instances in which visitation was of sufficient frequency because DHR workers and foster parents made diligent efforts to encourage and support visitation.

Item 14. Preserving connections

Item 14 was assigned an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement because in only 83 percent of the cases, reviewers determined that children's connections to family, community culture, faith, and friends had been adequately preserved while the children were in foster care. The primary finding was that DHR was inconsistent in its efforts to maintain children's connections to their biological families.

Item 15. Relative placement

Item 15 was assigned an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement because reviewers determined that in only 66 percent of the cases, the agency had made diligent efforts to locate and assess relatives as potential placement resources. A common finding for this item was that while DHR was effective in reaching out to maternal relatives, it was not as consistent in seeking and evaluating paternal relatives.

Item 16. Relationship of child in care with parents

Item 16 was assigned an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement because in only 74 percent of the cases, reviewers determined that the agency had made sufficient efforts to support or maintain the bond between parents and their children while the children were in foster care. The key concern identified with respect to this item was that DHR did not consistently attempt to work with fathers and involve them in visiting their children or in developing their children's case plans.

III. WELL-BEING

Outcome WB1: Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs.

Status of Well-Being Outcome 1

Alabama did not achieve substantial conformity with Well-Being Outcome 1. This determination was based on the finding that the outcome was rated as substantially achieved in only 54 percent of the case records reviewed, which is less than the 90 percent required for a determination of substantial conformity. A summary of findings for specific items assessed as relevant to this outcome is presented below.

Item 17. Needs and services of child, parents, foster parents

Item 17 was assigned an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement because in only 66 percent of the cases, reviewers determined that the needs and services of children, parents, and/or foster parents had been, or were being, adequately addressed by DHR. Although this finding reflects inconsistencies in practice rather than typifying case practice, reviewers observed several cases in which needs were not assessed; services were not offered; or services were offered, but the agency did not follow up to determine whether parents were accessing the services for themselves or their children.

Item 18. Child and family involvement in case planning

Item 18 was assigned an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement because in only 64 percent of the applicable case records, reviewers determined that DHR had appropriately involved parents or children in the process of developing the case plan. This rating reflects inconsistencies in practice, particularly with regard to efforts to involve fathers in the case planning process. However, there were many cases in which workers made concerted efforts to involve parents and children in case plan development on an ongoing basis.

Item 19. Worker visits with child

Item 19 was assigned an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement because in only 62 percent of the cases, reviewers determined that the frequency of caseworker visits with children was sufficient to ensure adequate monitoring of the child's safety and well-being. Case record reviewers determined that for most of the other cases, workers typically visited the children less than once a month.

Item 20. Worker visits with parents

Item 20 was assigned an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement because in only 53 percent of the cases, reviewers determined that workers' visits with parents were sufficiently frequent or of sufficient quality to promote the safety and well-being of the child or increase movement toward permanency for the child. The general finding was that for many of the cases, workers typically visited parents less than once a month.

Outcome WB2: Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs.

Status of Well-Being Outcome WB2

Alabama did not achieve substantial conformity with Well-Being Outcome 2. This determination is based on the finding that 71.4 percent of the case records reviewed were found to have substantially achieved this outcome, which is less than the 90 percent required for substantial conformity. A summary of findings for specific items assessed as relevant to this outcome is presented below.

Item 21. Educational needs of the child.

Item 21 was assigned an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement because in only 71 percent of the applicable cases, reviewers determined that DHR was effectively addressing children's educational needs, either because they did not assess needs or did not provide the services necessary to meet identified needs in the remaining cases.

Outcome WB3: Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs.

Status Of Well-Being Outcome 3

Alabama did not achieve substantial conformity with Well-Being Outcome 3. This determination was based on the finding that the outcome was rated as substantially achieved in 75 percent of the applicable cases, which is less than the 90 percent required for a determination of substantial conformity. A summary of findings for specific items assessed as relevant to this outcome is presented below.

Item 22. Physical health of the child

Item 22 was assigned an overall rating of Strength based on the finding that in 85 percent of the applicable case records, reviewers determined that DHR's efforts to address the physical health needs of children were adequate.

Item 23. Mental health of the child

Item 23 was assigned an overall rating of Area Needing Improvement because in only 74 percent of the applicable cases, reviewers determined that DHR was adequately addressing children's mental health assessment and service needs.

KEY FINDINGS RELATING TO SYSTEMIC FACTORS

IV. STATEWIDE INFORMATION SYSTEM

Status of Statewide Information System

Alabama is in substantial conformity with this factor.

Item 24. The State is operating a Statewide information system that, at a minimum, can readily identify the status, demographic characteristics, location, and goals for the placement of every child who is (or within the immediately preceding 12 months, has been) in foster care.

This item is rated as a Strength because the State's information system can provide all of the demographic characteristics, location, and goals for the placement of every child in foster care.

V. CASE REVIEW SYSTEM

Status of Case Review System

Alabama is not in substantial conformity with this systemic factor.

Item 25. Provides a process that ensures that each child has a written case plan to be developed jointly with the child's parent(s) that includes the required provisions.

Item 25 is rated as an Area Needing Improvement because although DHR has a process in place to meet this systemic factor, it is not consistent in the implementation of this process with respect to the involvement of parents in the case plan development.

Item 26. Provides a process for the periodic review of the status of each child, no less frequently than once every 6 months, either by a court or by administrative review.

Item 26 is rated as a Strength because information gathered during the onsite review and the Statewide Assessment indicates that the State has a process in place for periodic reviews and that generally these reviews are conducted in a timely manner for all children.

Item 27. Provides a process that ensures that each child in foster care under the supervision of the State has a permanency hearing in a qualified court or administrative body no later than 12 months from the date the child entered foster care and no less frequently than every 12 months thereafter.

Item 27 is rated as an Area Needing Improvement because the Statewide Assessment and information gathered during the onsite review indicate that even though the State has a process in place for permanency hearings, a significant number are not conducted in a timely manner.

Item 28. Provides a process for termination of parental rights proceedings in accordance with the provisions of the Adoption and Safe Families Act.

Item 28 is rated as an Area Needing Improvement because although DHR does provide a process for termination of parental rights in accordance with ASFA, adherence to the ASFA timelines varies among the counties and among the court systems.

Item 29. Provides a process for foster parents, preadoptive parents, and relative caregivers of children in foster care to be notified of, and have an opportunity to be heard in, any review or hearing held with respect to the child.

Item 29 is rated as a Strength because State law and agency policy require workers to give written notification to foster and adoptive parents and related caregivers of scheduled hearings and their right to attend, and training has been provided to foster parents to support their participation.

VI. QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM

Status of Quality Assurance System

Alabama is in substantial conformity with this systemic factor.

Item 30. The State has developed and implemented standards to ensure that children in foster care are provided quality services that protect the safety and health of the children.

Item 30 is rated as a Strength because the Statewide Assessment and information gathered during the onsite review indicate that the State has implemented standards and has a process in place to monitor compliance with the standards.

Item 31. The State is operating an identifiable quality assurance system that is in place in the jurisdictions where the services included in the CFSP are provided, evaluates the quality of services, identifies strengths and needs of the service delivery system, provides relevant reports, and evaluates program improvement measures implemented.

Item 31 is rated as a Strength because the State is operating a comprehensive quality assurance system in collaboration with community stakeholders that identifies practice and policy issues, provides reports to relevant stakeholders, evaluates the quality of the services provided, identifies gaps in services, and provides for collaboration with communities to meet service gaps.

VII. TRAINING

Status of Training

Alabama is in substantial conformity with this systemic factor.

Item 32. The State is operating a staff development and training program that supports the goals and objectives in the CFSP, addresses services provided under titles IV-B and IV-E, and provides initial training for all staff who deliver these services.

Item 32 is rated as a Strength because the State provides a comprehensive training program for all staff that supports the system of care and has successfully evolved as the system has improved and is based on staff needs.

Item 33. The State provides for ongoing training for staff that addresses the skills and knowledge base needed to carry out their duties with regard to the services included in the CFSP.

Item 33 is rated as a Strength because the State provides ongoing training through multiple State and local opportunities that address staff skill needs.

Item 34. The State provides training for current or prospective foster parents, adoptive parents, and staff of State licensed or approved facilities that care for children receiving foster care or adoption assistance under title IV-E that addresses the skills and knowledge base needed to carry out their duties with regard to foster and adopted children.

Item 34 was assigned a rating of Strength because the State provides current and prospective foster and adoptive parents quality training that prepares them to effectively parent children in their care.

VIII. SERVICE ARRAY

Status of Service Array

Alabama is in substantial conformity with this systemic factor.

Item 35. The State has in place an array of services that assess the strengths and needs of children and families and determine other service needs, address the needs of families in addition to individual children in order to create a safe home environment, enable children to remain safely with their parents when reasonable, and help children in foster and adoptive placements achieve permanency.

Item 35 is rated as a Strength because there is an array of services available to address the needs of children and families.

Item 36. The services in item 35 are accessible to families and children in all political jurisdictions covered in the State's CFSP.

This item is rated as a Strength because the State has effectively developed resources across the State, and counties are providing a variety of services Statewide.

Item 37. The services in item 35 can be individualized to meet the unique needs of children and families served by the agency.

Item 37 is rated as a Strength because, according to the Statewide Assessment, the focus of DHR is on individualized assessment and service delivery.

IX. AGENCY RESPONSIVENESS TO THE COMMUNITY

Status of Agency Responsiveness to the Community

Alabama is in substantial conformity with this systemic factor.

Item 38. In implementing the provisions of the CFSP, the State engages in ongoing consultation with tribal representatives, consumers, service providers, foster care providers, the juvenile court, and other public and private child- and family-serving agencies and includes the major concerns of these representatives in the goals and objectives of the CFSP.

Item 38 is rated as a Strength because DHR's inclusiveness and collaboration in setting goals and objectives and evaluating the child welfare system supports positive relationships with the community.

Item 39. The agency develops, in consultation with these representatives, annual reports of progress and services delivered pursuant to the CFSP.

Item 39 is rated as a Strength because DHR involves a wide array of stakeholders in development of the CFSP and annual progress reports.

Item 40. The State's services under the CFSP are coordinated with services or benefits of other Federal or federally assisted programs serving the same population.

This item is rated as a Strength because DHR engages in substantial and effective coordination of services and benefits with other programs.

X. FOSTER AND ADOPTIVE PARENT LICENSING, RECRUITMENT, AND RETENTION

Status of Foster and Adoptive Parent Licensing, Recruitment, and Retention

Alabama is in substantial conformity with this systemic factor.

Item 41. The State has implemented standards for foster family homes and child care institutions, which are reasonably in accord with recommended national standards.

This item is rated as a Strength because appropriate standards are in place. As noted in the Statewide Assessment, DHR licenses child placing agencies and residential facilities according to State standards on a biannual basis.

Item 42. The standards are applied to all licensed or approved foster family homes or childcare institutions receiving title IV-E or IV-B funds.

This item has been rated as a Strength because the State applies its standards to all licensed or approved foster family homes and childcare institutions receiving title IV-E or IV-B funds.

Item 43. The State complies with Federal requirements for criminal background clearances as related to licensing or approving foster care and adoptive placements and has in place a case planning process that includes provisions for addressing the safety of foster care and adoptive placements for children.

Item 43 is rated as a Strength because the State complies with the requirement for criminal background clearance and has multiple processes for addressing safety in foster care and adoptive placements.

Item 44. The State has in place a process for ensuring the diligent recruitment of potential foster and adoptive families that reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of children in the State for whom foster and adoptive homes are needed.

Item 44 is rated as a Strength because the State has a process for ensuring the diligent recruitment of potential foster and adoptive families that reflect the ethnic and racial diversity of children in the State for whom foster and adoptive homes are needed.

Item 45. The State has in place a process for the effective use of cross-jurisdictional resources to facilitate timely adoptive or permanent placements for waiting children.

This item is rated as a Strength because the State has a process in place to address barriers to cross-jurisdictional placements.

INTRODUCTION

This document presents the findings of the Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) for the State of Alabama. The findings were derived from the following documents and data collection procedures:

- The Statewide Assessment prepared by the State child welfare agency – the Alabama Department of Human Resources (DHR);
- The State Data Profile prepared by the Children’s Bureau of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services;
- Reviews of 50 case records from three counties in the State; and
- Interviews or focus groups (conducted at all three counties) with a wide range of stakeholders including children, parents, foster parents, various levels of State and county DHR personnel, collaborating agency personnel, school personnel, mental health providers, court personnel, legislators, and attorneys.

The key characteristics of the 50 case records reviewed are the following:

- 22 cases were reviewed in Jefferson County (Birmingham), 12 in Shelby County, and 16 in Montgomery County.
- All 50 cases were cases that had been open at some time during the period under review.
- 30 cases were “foster care cases” (cases in which the State agency had placement and care responsibility, and the children were in an out-of-home placement at some time during the period under review), and 20 were “in-home services cases” (cases in which families maintained custody of their children and received child welfare agency services while children remained in their homes or in a voluntary placement).
- In 14 (28%) cases, all children in the family were Caucasian; in 34 (68%) cases, all children in the family were African American; and in 2 (4%) cases, all children in the family were of two races.
- The **primary** reasons for the opening of a child welfare agency case were the following:
 - Neglect (not including medical neglect) – 13 cases (26%)
 - Sexual abuse - 7 cases (14%)
 - Physical abuse - 6 cases (12%)
 - Substance abuse by parent – 6 cases (12%)
 - Medical neglect - 3 cases (6%)
 - Child's behavior - 3 cases (6%)
 - Domestic violence in the child's home - 3 cases (6%)
 - Mental/physical health of parent - 2 cases (4%)
 - Reasons other than child maltreatment or child behavior - 7 cases (14%)

- Among **all** reasons identified for children coming to the attention of the child welfare agency, neglect (not including medical neglect) was cited in 27 (54%) cases, substance abuse by parents was cited in 20 (40%) cases, physical abuse was cited in 13 (26%) cases, and sexual abuse was cited in 11 (22%) cases.
- For 25 (83%) of the 30 foster care cases, the children entered foster care prior to the period under review and remained in foster care during the entire period under review. For 13 (65%) of the 20 in-home services cases, the case was opened prior to the period under review and remained open during the entire period under review.

The first section of the report presents the CFSR findings relevant to the State's performance in achieving specific outcomes for children in the areas of safety, permanency, and well-being. For each outcome, there is a table providing the degree of outcome achievement by site, a presentation of the State's status with regard to substantial conformity with the outcome, and a discussion of each item assessed as part of the overall outcome assessment. The second section of the report provides the ratings and a discussion of each of seven systemic factors relevant to the child welfare agency's ability to achieve positive outcomes for children.